

CLAIMS

- 1 1. A system identification module comprising:
2 a housing;
3 a persistent memory for storing system specific data associated with a communications
4 system having a backplane; and
5 a module connector for coupling to and removal from the backplane connector, the
6 module connector and the housing defining an enclosure surrounding the persistent memory, the
7 module connector electrically connecting the persistent memory to the backplane connector.
- 1 2. The system identification module of claim 1 wherein the housing has an outer surface,
2 the outer surface having a ridged portion for grasping the system identification module when the
3 system identification module is coupled to or removed from the backplane connector.
- 1 3. The system identification module of claim 1 further comprising a shelf processor, the
2 shelf processor controlling the programming of the persistent memory and the reading of data
3 from the persistent memory.
- 1 4. The system identification module of claim 1 wherein the persistent memory is a
2 programmable read-only memory device.
- 1 5. The system identification module of claim 4 wherein the programmable read-only
2 memory device is an electrically erasable programmable read-only memory device.
- 1 6. The system identification module of claim 4 wherein the programmable read-only
2 memory device is a 2-pin electrically erasable programmable read-only memory device.

1 7. The system identification module of claim 1 wherein the persistent memory comprises a
2 partitioned memory configured to receive data according to predefined data fields.

1 8. The system identification module of claim 1 wherein address information, data and
2 power are transmitted to the persistent memory over a single input pin.

1 9. The system identification module of claim 1 wherein the module connector comprises a
2 serial connector.

1 10. The system identification module of claim 9 wherein the serial connector is an RS-232
2 connector.

1 11. A communications shelf comprising:

2 a backplane having a backplane connector;

3 a plurality of communications cards in communication with each other through the
4 backplane; and

5 a system identification module coupled to the backplane through the backplane
6 connector, the system identification module comprising:

7 a housing;

8 a persistent memory for storing system specific data associated with the
9 communications shelf; and

10 a module connector for coupling to and removal from the backplane connector,
11 the module connector and the housing defining an enclosure surrounding the persistent

- 12 memory, the module connector electrically connecting the persistent memory to the
- 13 backplane connector.